



The Life of King Henry V by William Shakespeare

## **The Life of King Henry V by William Shakespeare**

**Read by Sonia, Tomas Peter, Brad "Hamlet" Filippone, Kelly S. Taylor, Jenn Broda, Craig Franklin and Sandra Schmit. Total running time: 03:13:39**

Shakespeare's famous second *Henriad* reaches its thrilling conclusion in this chronicle of King Henry V's spirited leadership over his country—a Henry who is a far cry from the prodigal prince who we saw in *Henry IV, Part I* and *Henry IV, Part II*. Now grown up and more mature than he was in his youth, Henry V is persuaded by the English clergy that he has an ancestral claim to the French throne, and when France's haughty Dauphin facetiously rebuffs him with a gift of tennis balls, Henry orders his troops to invade French lands and begin another violent and costly war. Thus ensues one of Shakespeare's most manifestly patriotic works, giving us in Henry a model of national zeal, courageousness, inspiration and determination, with speeches and scenes of such grand poetic intensity that they have cemented Henry V's legendary status even to this day.

But, as you shall also see, Shakespeare's expert way of providing the subtlest critiques remains a key component of this work, as we see glimpses of Henry as a manipulative tactician capable of achieving his ends through questionable means, and we are also given the perspectives of the many soldiers serving in Henry's army. While the return of memorable characters like Bardolph and Pistol provide us with the comic relief necessary to balance the grim realities of the bloody campaign, the introduction of others provides us with a more skeptical view of warfare and royal conquest. As ever with Shakespeare, there is more than one way to approach his plays, and there is no doubt that *Henry V* is among his most versatile accomplishments.

And to perform it all? Three men (Craig Franklin, Tomas Peter and Brad "Hamlet" Filippone) and four women (Sonia, Jenn Broda, Kelly S. Taylor and Sandra Schmit), determined to give you a performance of Shakespeare's work that you will never forget. You thought you knew **your** Shakespeare? Well, think again!

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